

## FOREWORD

Scholars, policy makers, and practitioners from around the country joined ONDCP and the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services in March of 1998, to address key policy questions regarding drug treatment and the justice system. This consensus meeting took stock of existing knowledge, probing scientific research and clinical experience to determine what is known with reasonable confidence. The participants found that quite a bit is known, but also found that what is being done is often not consistent with what is known. To help rectify this situation, ONDCP has taken a number of steps.

- A comprehensive statement of policy that reflects the state of established knowledge has been crafted and circulated, first among Federal agencies and then among major stakeholder organizations. In concert with the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services, ONDCP will convene a National Assembly on Drugs, Alcohol Abuse, and the Criminal Offender in December of 1999, where local, state, and Federal stakeholders will be challenged to seek consensus on sound national policy and identify short- and long-term actions required for its implementation.
- The Breaking the Cycle initiative -- a fully integrated program of testing, swift and certain sanctions, treatment and continued monitoring, and relapse prevention -- has been expanded from one to four sites, three for adults and one for juveniles.
- The Drug-Free Prison Zone Demonstration Project was established and is demonstrating, in eight states and selected Federal prisons, a program of regular inmate drug testing, the use of advanced technologies for drug detection, interventions including drug treatment, and training of correctional and other institutional staff.
- The field testing of Operating Standards for Prison-Based Therapeutic Communities (TCs) has been conducted by Therapeutic Communities of America (TCA), with ONDCP support.

This document is the result of that field testing effort. TCA is to be commended for this groundbreaking contribution and for bringing a new level of discipline to the discussion of drug treatment. This comprehensive set of operating standards for prison-based TCs -- over 120 standards across 11 program domains -- has now been validated in operational prison settings. It provides a blueprint for state and local leaders who want to do it right. The standards will eventually be put into a format appropriate for use by national accrediting organizations. In the interim, TCA's continuing leadership will be needed to provide expert guidance for their proper application. Well done TCA. We look forward to continuing progress, step by step.



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